

ERROR ANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH WRITING ASSIGNMENT OF VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS

Maureen Decinta Nira Permata

Abstract

Indonesian students from vocational schools need to learn two languages, which are English and Indonesian. Since English is a foreign language that they learn, it causes problems for them in learning the four skills in English including writing. This study aims to investigate the most common errors in essays written in English by 35 students in a selected public vocational school in Salatiga. For all of these students, Indonesia is their first language (L1). Using an error classification scheme and Microsoft Excel, 35 essays were analyzed and categorized into 17 types of errors. The results of the analysis show that four most common errors were mechanics, tenses, preposition, and subject-verb agreement. In composing these essays, the students were very much influenced by their L1 and developmental errors were also observed in their writing. This study helps both of students and teacher in order to avoid errors in writing sentences in English. It is also important to make the students aware of the differences in the structure of English their L1. Certain rules in Indonesian that do not work when they write in English need to be highlighted. Students need to understand the differences of these languages and make use of the unique features to produce good and acceptable sentences.

Keywords: ESL learners, grammatical errors, English essays, vocational school.